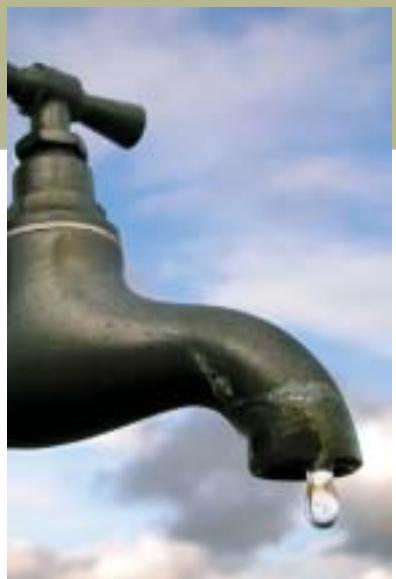


department of public utilities, los alamos county, nm



2004 drinking water quality report

Introduction

Each year we issue to our customers a Drinking Water Quality Report designed as an informational source about the quality water and services we deliver every day.

As one of our valued customers, we're pleased to present to you this year's Drinking Water Quality Report. As you will see on the following pages, our water is safe and met, or in most cases was better than federal and state requirements. If you have any questions about this report or concerns regarding the water utility, please contact Tim Glasco, Deputy Utilities Manager at (505)662-8130.

Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water.

Source Of Our Drinking Water

The water source for Los Alamos County comes from groundwater pumped by twelve wells, which tap the main aquifer under the Pajarito Plateau, part of the Santa Fe Formation. Our system has wellhead protection in place and we treat the water with a disinfectant.

The Department of Public Utilities routinely monitors for constituents in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. The table on

the following page shows the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1st to December 31, 2004. As water travels over the land or underground, it can pick up substances or contaminants such as microbes, inorganic and organic chemicals, and radioactive substances. All drinking water, including bottled drinking water, may be reasonably expected to contain at least small amounts of some constituents. It's important to remember that the presence of these constituents does not necessarily pose a health risk.

For People With Special Conditions

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Consumer Confidence Report: 2004 Drinking Water Quality Data

Detected Contaminant (Unit Measurement)	Violation Y/N	Range of Levels Detected	System Average	Date Tested	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Inorganic Compounds							
Arsenic (ppb)	N	0.53 - 9.27	3.47	8/21/03	0 ¹	10 ¹	Natural deposits
Chromium (ppb)	N	2.83 - 5.63	4.64	8/21/03	100	100	Natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	N	0 - 1.9	0.58	Daily	4	4	Natural deposits, fluoridation by County
Nitrate & Nitrite (ppm)	N	0.31 - 0.42	0.37	8/21/03	10	10	Leaching septic tanks, sewage, natural deposits
Lead-Residential taps (ppb)	N	<5.0 - 12.0	over 90% < detect limit 5 ppb	8/15/02	0	AL=15 ²	Corrosion of household plumbing
Copper-Residential taps (ppm)	N	<0.50 - 0.12	over 90% < detect limit 0.09 ppm	8/15/02	1.3	AL=1.3 ²	Corrosion of household plumbing
Hardness (as CaCO ₃) (grains/gal)	N	1.66 - 5.34	3.34	8/21/03	-	-	Natural deposits
Disinfection By-Products							
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) ³ (ppb)	N	0.2 - 16.2	4.79	Monthly	0	80	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Radionuclides							
Alpha emitters (pCi/L)	N	0.045 - 1.34	0.58	8/21/03	0	15	Erosion of natural deposits
Beta/photon emitters (pCi/L) ⁴	N	0.826 - 4.13	2.49	8/21/03	0	50	Decay of natural and man-made deposits
Microbiology							
Total Coliform (cfu per 100mL) ⁵	N	Monthly Samples max. positive 2 of 49 (4%) min. positive 0 of 44 (0%)	Total positive samples 2004: 3 of 556	Monthly	0	5%	Naturally present in the environment

¹These arsenic values are effective January 23, 2006. Until then, the MCL is 50 ppb and there is no MCLG.

²The Action Level (AL for lead/copper is exceeded if 90% of homes tested have lead levels above 15 ppb and copper levels above 1/3 ppm. Samples are collected every three years. No lead/copper samples in 2002 exceeded the AL.

³TTHM concentrations vary seasonally in our water.

⁴Note: the MCL for Beta particles is 4 mrem/year. EPA considers 50 pCi/L to be a level of concern for beta particles.

⁵The MCL for total coliforms is the presence of coliform bacteria in 5% or more of the monthly samples.

How To Read The Above Table

In this table you will find many terms and abbreviations you might not be familiar with. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:

- **ppm = Parts per million or Milligrams per liter (mg/l)** - one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.
- **ppb = Parts per billion or Micrograms per liter** - one part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years, or a single penny in \$10,000,000.
- **pCi/L = Picocuries per liter** - picocuries per liter is a measure of the radioactivity in water.

- **MCL = Maximum Contaminant Level** - The "Maximum Allowed" is the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
- **MCLG = Maximum Contaminant Level Goal** - The "Goal" is the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

- **Range of Levels Detected** = The minimum to maximum test results observed in 2003.

What Does This Mean?

As you can see by the table, our system had no violations. We're proud that your drinking water meets or in most cases is better than Federal and State requirements. We have learned through our monitoring and testing that some contaminants have been detected. The EPA has determined that your water IS SAFE at these levels.

Arsenic

While your drinking water meets the current standard for arsenic, it does contain low levels of arsenic. The standard balances the current understanding of arsenic's possible health effects against the costs of removing arsenic from drinking water. The EPA continues to research the health effects of low levels of arsenic, which is a mineral known to cause cancer in humans at high concentrations and is linked to other health effects such as skin damage and circulatory problems.

Special Water Quality Monitoring

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation collected samples of the Los Alamos County Water System for contaminants that are currently not listed as regulated contaminants but could be listed at some future date, should the EPA feel the need to regulate a contaminant to protect the public health. All sample results were below the reporting limit (none detected).

Radon

We constantly monitor the water supply for various contaminants. In the year 2000, we detected radon 222 in our water supply wells, which showed a level of 235 to 685 pCi/L, an average of 408 pCi/L. There is no federal regulation for radon levels in drinking water. Exposure over a long period of time to air transmitting radon may cause adverse health effects.

Perchlorate

Using the EPA approved method for testing perchlorate, a positive detection in the amount of 4.34 ppb was identified in the Otowi-1 well on

February 8, 2003. This well is primarily utilized for non-portable uses. While the EPA has not adopted an MCL for perchlorate, it has established an official reference dose (RfD) of 0.0007 mg/kg/day. A reference dose is a scientific estimate of a daily exposure level that is not expected to cause adverse health effects in humans. According to the EPA's website, this level is consistent with the recommended RfD included in the National Academy of Science's January 2005 report.

Some people who ingest perchlorate from drinking water, milk or food, in amounts in excess of the RfD may experience effects associated with hypothyroidism. Perchlorate interferes with the production of thyroid hormones, which are required for normal pre- and postnatal development in humans, as well as normal body metabolism. More information is available at www.epa.gov/fedfac/documents/perchlorate.htm.

Source Water Assessment & Assessment and Protection Program

The Department of Public Utilities is well maintained and operated, and sources of drinking water are generally protected from potential sources of contamination based on well construction, hydro geologic settings, and system operations and management. In 2003 the State of New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) performed a Source Water Assessment & Assessment and Protection Program (SWAPP) to identify possible sources of contamination. The susceptibility of our entire water system was ranked by NMED in 2004 as moderately high. Contact Tim Glasco, Deputy Utilities Manager at 662-8130 to discuss the findings of the SWAPP report.

Department of Public Utilities
Los Alamos County
901 Trinity Drive
Los Alamos, NM 87544

PRSR STD
U S POSTAGE
PAID
Postal Pros

Utilities Board

The Los Alamos County Utilities Board encourages public interest and participation in decisions affecting drinking water. Regular Board meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the downstairs conference room of the County's Annex Building, located at 901 Trinity Drive. The public is always welcome.



UTILITIES BOARD: left to right: Chris Ortega, Robert Gibson-Vice Chair, Felicia Orth-Chair, Thurman Tally, and Oliver Miles.



WATER PRODUCTION CREW: left to right back row: Tim Glasco, Moses Medina, Wayne Witten, Charles Brown, Joseph Montoya; front row: Darryl Tabor, Daryl Hastings, Rick Herrera, and Harold Sanchez. Not pictured: Julian Bonnell, John Fesser, and Ted Jaramillo.

Who Are We?

We are the Water Production Division of the Department of Public Utilities for Los Alamos County and we thank you for allowing us to continue to provide your family with clean, quality water this past year and the year to come.